

# NEBRASKA STATE FIRE MARSHAL OFFICIAL INTERPRETATION



**Interpretation Number:** 96-02

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Edition

**Section(s):** 7.7.1, 7.1.10.1

**Comments:**

Clear path of exterior exit travel  
from all occupied buildings

**Question:** Must an exterior path of clear and safe access be provided and maintained from each exit of a building?

**Response:** Yes. All occupied buildings must provide safe access to a public way. In most cases an open field or grassy area that leads to a public way such as a parking lot, public sidewalk, alley or street is acceptable.

Buildings occupied by the very young or very old (educational, assembly and health care occupancies) must take additional measures to ensure that the exterior path to a public way is clear and accessible at all times. Placing a paved walk from the exit door to a public way best accomplishes this. If site constraints prohibit a walkway, due to a severe slope or extended distance, other alternatives may be used.

Measures as alternatives to a public walkway may consist of a clear space or pad constructed of the same material as the walk at least thirty feet from the building. The pad must be large enough to hold all of the people that may use the exit the walkway serves. It shall provide seven square feet per person for health care occupancies and three square feet per person for assembly and educational occupancies.

Although a paved walk is the preferred method of meeting this requirement, other materials such as asphalt, brick or other stable surface may be acceptable. The authority having jurisdiction will determine which is needed by an on site inspection. Regardless of the method chosen, the path must be clear and free of snow, ice, mud and other impediments at all times.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** Dennis C. Hohbein, State of Nebraska Fire Marshal